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CD 655 Ministering with Children Through the Church

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CD 655 - Ministering with Children Through the Church

Examines the needs of children in contemporary society, biblical perspectives on children and how they were to be involved in the faith community, and characteristics of the child's physical, emotional, cognitive, moral, and faith development. Explores the ministries a church can provide to involve children in the faith community, meeting their needs, nurturing wholeness and faith.

Course Objectives

Having completed this course with competence, the student will:

Have a basic understanding of the physical, emotional, cognitive, moral, and spiritual development, the potential and needs of children from birth to age 12.

Identify processes and commitments characteristic of ministries designed to involve children in a faith community and nurture them toward wholeness and a maturing faith.

Be able to articulate his/her theology of children's ministries based on Scripture and an understanding of child development.

Have grown in ability to:

- a. Involve children in meaningful worship and learning.
- b. Support families in the nurture of children.
- c. Support children in times of crisis such as illness, divorce, grief, or abuse.
- d. Nurture special children such as the gifted, those with handicaps, or latch key children.
- e. Examine the issues to consider when deciding on schooling for children.
- f. Identify the training needs of lay volunteers ministering with children in the church.

Assignments

Reading

Joining Children on the Spiritual Journey, Catherine Stonehouse

Children Matter, Cannell, May, Posterski, and Stonehouse

Book Manuscript draft available at the beginning of the semester

Children in the Early Church, W.A. Strange

Family the Forming Center, Marjorie J. Thompson

Offering the Gospel to Children, Gretchen Wolff Pritchard

The Pastoral Care of Children, Daniel H. Grosseohme

Children in Crisis: A New Commitment, Phyllis Kilbourn, ed.

Select one of the following:

Young Children and Worship, Sonja Stewart and Jerome Berryman (Read by March 16)
Children in the Worshiping Community, David Ng and Virginia Thomas (Read by March 16)

The Family Friendly Church, Ben Freudenburg and Rick Lawrence (Read by March 23)

Nurturing Faith in Families, Jolene L. Roehlkepartain (Read by March 23)

Why Nobody Learns Much about Anything at Church, Thom and Joani Schultz (Read by April 6)

Celebrate the Feasts, Martha Zimmermans (Read by April 6)

Bullying: A Spiritual Crisis, Ronald Hecker Cram (Read by April 13)

Exceptional Teaching: A Comprehensive Guide for Including Students with Disabilities, Jim Pierson (Read by April 20)

Safe Sanctuaries: Reducing the Risk of Child Abuse in the Church, Joy Thomburg (Read by May 4)

On the date when all reading is to be completed for a given text, submit a Reading Card stating that you have completed the reading in that text. The course Schedule indicates the material to be read prior to each class session, and the dates when Reading Cards are due.

Projects

A. Credit - No Credit Projects

1. Observe Children: During the term be open to learn from children. When they are present, listen to them. Observe them in worship.

2. Cooperative Learning Group: With 3 other students form a Cooperative Learning Group. Meet the first week of class to assign books and decide when to hear presentations. Each group member will select a different book from the “select one” list of the reading assignment. Group members will read their book and share with the group an outline of the book and key concepts from it. Take a minimum of 30 minutes to present and discuss each book.

B. Graded Projects

1. Mapping the Journey: Prepare a comprehensive chart that lays out the characteristics of a child’s psychosocial, cognitive, moral, and spiritual development during the various segments of the journey through childhood, infancy, preschool, early elementary, and pre-adolescence. Also include columns for “Family Implications” and “Ministry Implications.”

Grading Criteria:

1. Comprehensiveness of descriptions
2. Insightfulness of implications

Due: Part I – February 24

Part II – March 2

Full Chart – March 9

2. Spiritual Journey Reflections: Particularly in the early part of the semester, reflect on your spiritual journey, looking more deeply at your childhood and how that part of the journey has influenced the rest. Prepare a 3-5-page report of your reflections that includes the following.

a. A diagram of your spiritual journey from birth to the present. Picture high points, low points, critical periods, and key people who walked with you.

b. Tell the story of your spiritual journey from birth to 12 or 14 years of age and how that part of your journey has impacted you later in life. Reflect briefly on how your experience compares to the child development understandings from course readings.

Grading Criteria:

1. Quality of reflection

2. Insightfulness regarding the relationship between childhood and ongoing journey

Due: March 23

3. Listening to Children, Observing Their World: Prepare an 8-10 page paper integrating your insights and learning from several sources and articulating what you believe the church should offer in ministries with children. Prepare for the writing of the paper by doing the following.

a. Interview Children: Interview three children, one from each age group, 4-6, 7-9, and 10-12. In your interviews include the following:

i. Have each child draw you a picture of God (provide the child with paper and markers or crayons.)

Ask the child to tell you about his or her picture. It would be good to record responses to study later.

ii. Show the child a page on which you have written a small 7 and a very large 3. Ask the child which number is bigger.

iii. Tell the child the story of two children, one who broke one glass while climbing up to reach candy he/she had been told not to eat before dinner. The second child, while getting dishes to set the table for his/her mother, knocked ten glasses off the counter and broke all ten glasses. Ask: which child was naughtiest? Why? Which child deserves most punishment? Why? Listen carefully to the child's response to the "why" questions.

iv. Ask the child about prayer.

Do you pray?

How do you think God hears your prayers?

Does God ever talk to you?

How do you hear God?

v. Ask: Have you ever felt God close to you? Can you tell me about that?

vi. Have each child draw you a picture of something that is special about church.

Ask the child to tell you about his or her picture.

b. Reflect on the children's ministries you have seen: In the light of what you are learning in this course, identify the strengths and weaknesses of the children's ministries you have seen. If you have had limited experience with children's ministries you will need to observe a children's ministry in action. You might observe

in the children's ministry attended by the children you interviewed. Incorporate your insights from your reflections or observation and analysis into your paper.

- c. **Write the Paper:** Base the 8-10-page paper on material covered in this course, your interviews, and your reflections on children's ministries.
- Discuss the findings from your interviews and how they confirm or differ with material from readings and class presentations (3-5 pages).
 - Analyze the children's ministries you have seen in the light of what you have learned in this course about children and ministries with children. Include a discussion of what should be added to the ministries you have observed for them to provide the nurture needed by children (3-5 pages).

Be sure to document sources of ideas in the paper.

Submit pictures with the paper.

Grading Criteria

1. Quality of reflection on interviews with children and relation to course material
2. Quality of reflection on children's ministries
3. Significance of ideas for enhancing the church's ministry with children.

Due: April 13

2. Research Paper: Select a topic relating to ministry with children, research it, and write an 8-10-page paper. Present the findings of your research and discuss their implications for ministry with children. You may cite course materials in the paper, but must cite 3-5 additional books or articles, and may include insights from Internet resources. Use a standard form of documentation.

Prepare a 20-30 minute presentation to share the insights of your research with classmates. These presentations will be made in groups of 4, May 18.

Grading Criteria

1. Significance of findings
2. Insightfulness of applications to ministry with children
3. Quality of writing and organization of paper

Paper Due: May 11

Presentations Due: May 18

Grading

For each of the following assignments you have the potential of earning the designated points.

Mapping the Journey	20
Spiritual Journey Reflections	10
Listening to Children	30
Research Paper	30
Reading	<u>10</u>
Total	100

The course grade will be assigned based on the following scale.

95 – A	80 – B-
90 – A –	77.5 – C+
85 – B+	75 – C
82.5 – B	72.5 – C-

Class attendance is expected.

Course Schedule

Dates	Topics	Reading	Items Due
February 10	Getting Started		
February 17	Children in the Bible	Stonehouse Ch. 1-2 Cannell Ch. 2 Strange Ch. 1-5	<u>Reading Card:</u> Strange
February 24	Understanding Child Development	Stonehouse Ch. 3-5 Cannell Ch. 4	Mapping the Journey - I
March 2	Knowing God in Childhood	Stonehouse Ch. 6-7 Cannell Ch. 5	Mapping the Journey - II
March 9	Communicating Theological Concepts to Children	Stonehouse Ch. 8-9 Pritchard Ch. 1-5	Mapping the Journey - Complete <u>Reading Card:</u> Stonehouse
March 16	Story in the Child's Faith Development	Pritchard Ch. 6-10	
March 23	Effective Teaching Learning Ministries	Cannell Ch. 1, 7 Pritchard Ch. 19-24	Spiritual Journey Reflections
March 30	Reading Week		
April 6	Ministries with Families	Cannell Ch. 6 Thompson	<u>Reading Card:</u> Thompson
April 13	Generations Learning and Growing Together Schooling Options	Cannell Ch. 3 Pritchard Ch. 11-18	Listening to Children
April 20	Welcoming Special Children Walking with Gifted Children	Cannell Ch. 8 Pritchard Ch. 19-24	<u>Reading Card:</u> Cannell & Pritchard
April 27	Pastor Care of Children	Grossoehme	<u>Reading Card:</u> Grossoehme
May 4	Preparing for Adolescence		
May 11	Children and Abuse Ministry with at Risk Children	Kilbourn	Research Paper <u>Reading Card:</u> Kilbourn
May 18	Presentations and Wrap Up		Research Presentation <u>Reading Card:</u> Selected Book

All papers are to be typed and double-spaced.

Sources are to be documented using some approved form.

**Inclusive language is to be used when speaking of human beings.
Print SPO number on front of papers**